

usual—and the House did the same thing. They passed the bills yesterday. We passed them yesterday, and we will pass them today.

With that, I welcome the chairman of the Military Construction Subcommittee and thank her in advance for the leadership she has provided to this very important committee.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Texas for her comments.

Today I am very pleased to bring before the Senate the conference agreement on the fiscal year 2002 military construction appropriations bill.

Given the circumstances, this is a particularly timely and time-sensitive conference report. I am very pleased that the Senate has demonstrated a willingness to move quickly on it.

The military construction conference agreement provides \$10.5 billion of new budget authority. That is a 17.5-percent increase over last year's military construction funding, and it is a 5.3-percent increase over the President's budget request. This statistic alone sends a strong message of support to America's men and women in uniform.

This is a good package. It meets the most pressing needs of the military, both in terms of readiness and quality-of-life issues. It is not, of course, a perfect package. The conference report does not include everything the Senate wanted, nor does it include everything the House wanted. It does, however, address the priorities of the Department of Defense, which I think is most important, as well as both Houses of Congress. It is a carefully crafted compromise. It is both balanced and bipartisan.

I am particularly pleased to see such quick action on this measure at a time when we as a nation are asking for so much from our men and women in uniform and from their families. The conference agreement provides \$4.8 billion for the Active components of the military. That is a 35-percent increase over fiscal year 2001. So the military components are up 35.8 percent. It provides \$953 million for the Reserve components. That is a 357-percent increase over last year. For family housing, the conference agreement provides \$4.1 billion. That is a 12-percent increase over last year.

These are important increases. They signal a commitment to upgrading and rebuilding the infrastructure that is truly the backbone of our Nation's military.

The conference report also includes a \$100 million increase over the President's budget request for environmental cleanup at military installations that have been closed as part of the base realignment and closure effort. This is most significant. We need to clean up these bases so they can be transitioned into civilian use. This additional funding is necessary. It enables the military to honor its commit-

ments to the people and the communities that have been affected by the economic upheaval caused by base closures.

I point out that this is a great deal of money, yet much more is going to be needed before the environmental cleanup of BRAC sites across the Nation is complete. This is certainly something we should consider before we embark on any future rounds of base closings. I believe this most strongly.

One other item I want to mention today is the issue of defense access roads. The events of September 11 have made us all the more aware of the potential vulnerability of sensitive civilian and military installations to the threat of terrorist attack, and a number of our colleagues have expressed concern about the need for upgrading access roads serving military installations, particularly around chemical demilitarization facilities.

These roads are generally Federal or State highways that provide access to defense installations but are not owned by the Defense Department. Therefore, funding to construct access roads has to go through the Department of Transportation. The military construction bill includes a standing provision authorizing the Secretary of Defense to provide funds to the Transportation Department for access roads but only—only—when the Secretary of Defense has certified that these roads are important for national defense.

In other words, these are not projects that can easily be added to the MILCON bill if the President does not request them. However, because of the current sensitivity of chemical demilitarization facilities, we included a provision in our conference agreement that will enable the Defense Department to conduct a feasibility study on the requirements for Defense roads at chemical demilitarization sites in the United States to support emergency preparedness requirements.

I might also mention the Senate MILCON bill and the House MILCON bill had about a \$600 million difference between the two bills. There were about 173 adds from Members. Only 3 of them were the same in both the House and the Senate bills. So truly the Senate staffers on both sides have done a wonderful job in putting together the conference report.

I am very pleased to say it was a unanimous vote in the conference committee. So it was a reconciling of interests.

I very much thank Chairman BYRD. I thank Senator STEVENS and particularly my ranking member on the subcommittee, Senator HUTCHISON, for their unflagging support and assistance in bringing this conference report to the Senate. Again, I particularly thank the subcommittee staff for their hard work on this measure.

I am very pleased the military construction bill will be one of the first appropriations conference agreements sent to the President, and I hope he will sign it without delay.

I turn this over to the ranking member for her comments, and I reserve the remainder of my time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I fully endorse the comments made by our subcommittee chairman, Senator FEINSTEIN. I am pleased to recommend the military construction conference report for fiscal year 2002 to the Senate. We have worked very hard, Senator FEINSTEIN and myself, with our House colleagues, to bring this conference report to a successful conclusion.

I thank our colleagues from the House side, the chairman, DAVID HOBSON from Ohio, and JOHN OLVER from Massachusetts, the ranking member, for working with us in such a collegial way.

As Senator FEINSTEIN said, there were many disagreements and, frankly, some different priorities when our two bills passed respectively in the House and the Senate, but we worked hard and in a very productive way to resolve those differences and keep the priorities of each House but within a responsible budget. Everybody gave a little, but I think everyone did the right thing, and I am very pleased with the product.

We sought a balanced bill, one that provides funding for planning, design, construction, alteration, and improvement of military facilities worldwide, both for Active-Duty and Reserve Forces. I think this is a very important point because we know our Reserve Forces are stepping up to the plate as we speak.

Our President has called 40,000 of them to service, and there could be more. So we are very cognizant of the need for our Reserves to be supported and, in fact, there is a total of almost \$1 billion for Guard and Reserve facilities in this military construction bill.

Additionally, we have focused on military housing. This has been a priority for all of us. Quality of life for our men and women in the services is very important to us, and we are making a transition in our military, frankly, from a force that used to be mostly single men, some single women, to now families of men and women. For that reason, we have had to adjust military construction priorities in recent years. We have \$1.2 billion for barracks improvements; \$44 million for child care centers; \$199 million for hospitals and medical facilities and \$4 billion for family housing.

This intensifies the effort to improve the quality of military housing and accelerate the elimination of substandard housing. I am very pleased with those priorities.

I also concur with the comments of Senator FEINSTEIN on the issue of access roads. A number of colleagues expressed to me their concern about the need for upgrading access roads near chemical demilitarization sites. A defense access road must be appropriately certified by the Department of